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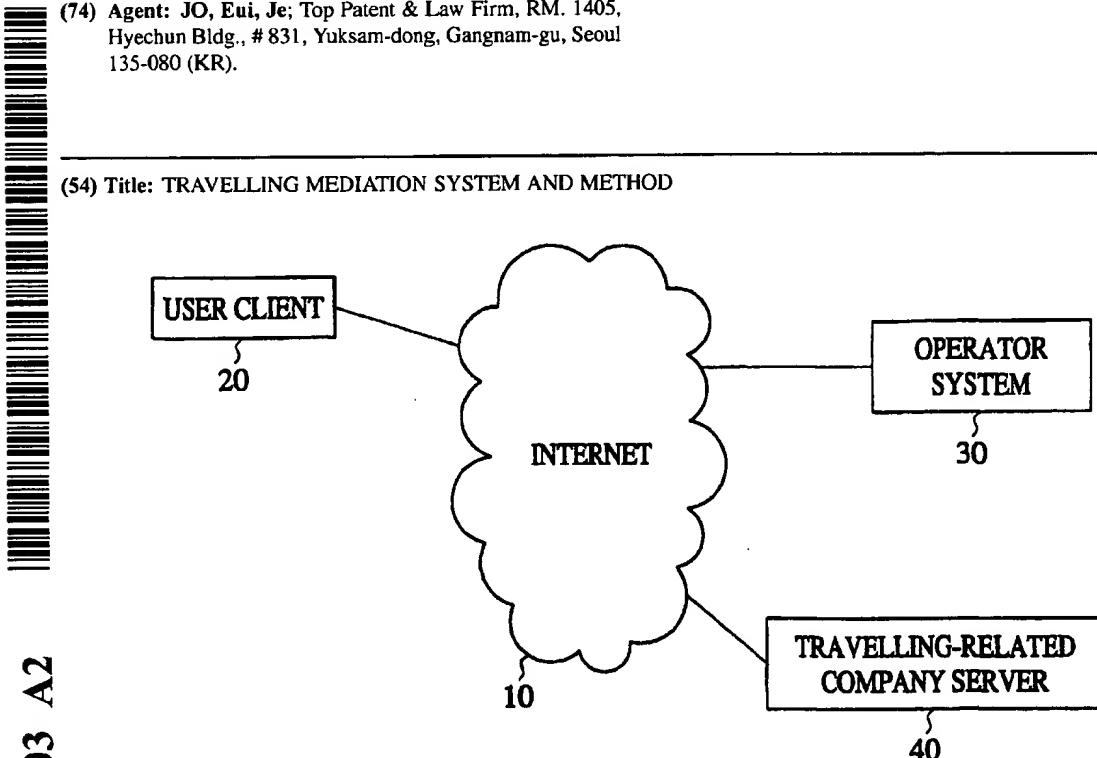
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(71) Applicant and (72) Inventor: MA, Lim, Seok [KR/KR]; 104-1 Shillim 2-dong, Gwanak-gu, Seoul 151-855 (KR).		<i>For two-letter codes and other abbreviations, refer to the "Guidance Notes on Codes and Abbreviations" appearing at the beginning of each regular issue of the PCT Gazette.</i>
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(54) Title: TRAVELLING MEDIATION SYSTEM AND METHOD



(57) Abstract: A travelling mediation system is disclosed, which receives various user information from domestic and foreign travellers who wish to travel over the world, stores the user information by each item, retrieves the stored user information and compares the retrieved user information with previously stored other travellers' user information, and connects the one travellers with the other travellers who wish to travel in the same destination and who are the closest travellers to one another in view of sexes, ages, tastes and majors. In particular, the travelling mediation system connects travellers with inhabitants in a corresponding destination, and then induces the one travellers to provide the free charge for board and lodging for the other travellers during paying a mutual visit and to play a role of mediation to travellers, to thereby seek the pleasure and safety of travelling. Also, the travelling mediation system links with travelling-related companies to thus provide various travelling-related services conveniently and cheaply.

TRAVELLING MEDIATION SYSTEM AND METHOD**DESCRIPTION**5 **Technical Field**

The present invention relates to a travelling mediation system and method for guiding travellers to safer and more convenient travelling, and more particularly, to a travelling mediation system and method which receives various personal information from travellers all over the world, compares the personal information with the other travellers' personal information, and links the one travellers with the other travellers who are the closest travellers to one another in view of travelling destinations, travelling purposes, tastes and so on.

15 **Background Art**

With development of traffic facilities and communications and economic support, people like to travel and thus travelling widens from local trips to overseas journeys. Also, the number of travellers increases all over the world as well as in Korea.

20 The governments and local autonomous entities all over the world as well as in Korea, develop various sight-seeing resources of their own countries or provinces, set related incidental facilities in a good condition, and publicize the sight-seeing resources and the related incidental facilities, to thereby induce travellers to travel in the publicized countries and provinces.

25 The publicity is being performed via printed materials, broadcasting media and the Internet communications.

In general, people who wish to travel, especially, travel around the world, contact travelling agencies to obtain travelling advices or listen to travelling

experience stories. from people who had already travelled. in order to make a decision of travelling schedules.

Since the Internet communications are recently spread. people who wish to travel can obtain information about a corresponding travelling area via the
5 Internet.

At present. travelling information and travelling services are provided via the Internet communications. chiefly only with respect to information provision such as pictures and explanation. traffic information. events. and mediation to board and lodging of each travelling area in the world which are provided by the
10 governments. the local autonomous entities. the local entities. the experienced travellers and so on.

However. the above travelling information and travelling services are restrictively provided in the kinds of information and the amount of information depending upon a need of each information provider or each information
15 providing capability.

As a result. it takes much time for people who wish to travel in each area at home and abroad to obtain sufficient information with respect to a travelling destination area via the Internet. since they should visit various web sites.

Also. people tend to travel in the world individually or together with a
20 minority of people instead of a group tour via a travelling agency. Under the circumstances. the thus-obtained simple travelling information having the level of transferring the travelling knowledge or experience is not substantially helpful in order for a traveller or travellers to travel efficiently in a corresponding area.

Thus. the traveller or travellers are somewhat afraid of the travelling
25 schedule such as the board and lodging matter and the safety matter at a strange place. together with uneasiness of the travelling. .

Moreover. the above simple travelling knowledge or experience provision is not greatly helpful for people who tend to have new experience of travelling and become acquainted with local friends in the world instead of simple tours.

Disclosure of the Invention

To solve the above problems, it is an object of the present invention to provide a travelling mediation system and method for letting travellers make friends with other travellers or inhabitants naturally in the world and easily solving board and lodging and safety matters during travelling, in which the travellers are linked with the other travellers or inhabitants having similar travelling purposes, hobbies and tastes to one another.

To accomplish the above object of the present invention, there is provided a travelling mediation system comprising: the Internet which enables data communications among a plurality of unspecified people all over the world; a plurality of user clients which enable data communications by wire or wireless on the Internet; an operator system which provides travelling information and travelling-related services to the user clients, receives user information and travelling schedule information from the user clients all over the world, compares the user information and travelling schedule information with the other user information and travelling schedule information, and links the one user with the other user or inhabitants who are the closest user to one another in view of travelling destinations, travelling purposes, tastes and so on; and a travelling-related company server which links with the operator system to provide traveling-related services to members of the operator system.

There is also provided a travelling mediation method comprising the steps of: receiving user information and travelling schedule information; comparing the user information and travelling schedule information received with the previously received other user information and travelling schedule information; sending a comparison and result to the user clients included in the comparison and result and receiving a confirmation from each user client; and connecting the user clients having confirmed the comparison and result.

Brief Description of the drawings

The above object and other advantages of the present invention will become more apparent by describing the preferred embodiments thereof in more detail with reference to the accompanying drawings in which:

FIG. 1 shows the whole configuration of a travelling mediation system according to the present invention:

FIG. 2 shows a detailed configuration of an operator system of FIG. 1; and

FIG. 3 is a flow-chart view illustrating the whole sequence of a travelling mediation method according to the present invention.

Best Mode for Carrying out the Invention

A preferred embodiment of the present invention will be described with reference to the accompanying drawings.

Referring to FIG. 1, a user client 20, an operator system 30 and a travelling-related company server 40 are mutually connected through the Internet 10 in a travelling mediation system according to the present invention.

The user client 20 means at least one terminal which is connected to the Internet 10 by wire or wireless, enabling data communications with other user clients 20, and gains access to a server to receive and send necessary information from and to the server. Also, a web browser is installed and executed in the client 20, to thereby enable the client 20 to use a web document including various texts and images, and an e-mail program is installed and executed therein, to thereby enable the client to receive and send a mail. Further, the client 20 includes a mobile telecommunications terminal which can use a wireless Internet service such as WAP (Wireless Application Protocol).

The operator system 30 operates an Internet web site which provides the user clients 20 with travelling information, traffic information and board-and-

lodging information all over the world, and receives user information and travelling schedule information for membership registration of a user. Here, the user is a person who uses the user clients (20). Also, the operator system 30 compares the user and travelling schedule information of registered members with the other members' user and schedule information, and performs searching for whether or not to link the one registered members with the other members or inhabitants who are the closest members to one another in view of travelling destinations, travelling purposes, tastes and so on, and then sends the comparison result to corresponding member or members via the e-mail. Also, the operator system 30 enables the registered members to inquire the registered items, and register their own billing procedures to pay for a charge for service uses.

The function of the operator system 30 will be described in detail later.

The travelling-related company server 40 is a computer which operates in a travelling-related company such as travelling agencies, hotels, a transport service company including airlines and railways, insurance companies for travellers' insurance, and banking facilities for allowing and paying for a card use of each user, that is, in the travelling-related company associated with the operator system 30 in mutual services to thereby provide discounted services to registered users. Here, the travelling-related company corresponds to all the local or foreign companies all over the world. That is, a user registered as a member gains access to the operator system 30 or the corresponding travelling-related company server 40, and can make reservation for services of the travelling-related companies in a desired place according to his or her travelling schedule. In this case, the traveller visits a corresponding travelling-related company in each corresponding place and informs the company that he or she is a member registered in the operator system 30, to thereby obtain a discount service.

FIG. 2 shows a detailed configuration of the operator system 30 of FIG. 1.

A master server 31 is a main component of the operator system 30 in the present invention, which compares user information among registered users and

links the one users with the other users who are the closest users to one another in view of travelling destinations, travelling purposes, tastes and so on, and connects among the linked users. In particular, users who have particular tastes or purposes are separately classified among the users, to thereby connect among the 5 particularly classified users. For example, assuming all the universities over the world are connected on a on-line basis, if a student in a university intends to go to study for language or major subject to one of other universities, the master server 31 connects the student with one of students in his or her intended university. That is, in the case that a student in a university "A" intends to go to study for a 10 training course to a university "B," a student of the university "B" is connected with the student of the university "A." In this case, a student who has a plan to go to study to the university "A" in future among students in the university "B" is connected to the student in the university "A" in priority, to thereby provide mutual assistance. Also, the master server 31 controls the function of the 15 operator system 30 generally in whole.

A slave server 32 is a dependent server upon the master server 31, which shares the load of the master server 31 normally and substitutes the function of the master server 31 with its own function if the master server 31 is turned down, to thereby prevent the shut-down of the whole system. Also, if the master server 31 20 is restored, the slave server 32 transfers the function to the master server 31 and then shares only the load of the master server 31 mutually.

A web server 33 operates an Internet web site which provides the user clients 20 with travelling information, traffic information and board-and-lodging information all over the world, and receives personal information and travelling 25 schedule information for membership registration of the user clients 20, in order to provide an interface for the user clients 20. In particular, since a number of students wish to travel around the world or go abroad to study for language training courses, the web site of the web server 33 connects the universities all over the world to let the students share mutual information and mediate the

students to travel in other places or countries.

A mail server 34 provides the comparison and linking result performed by the master server 31 to corresponding members via an e-mail and enables relevant members to receive a confirmation mail with respect to the comparison result from each of the corresponding users. Besides, the mail server 34 performs a function of sending and receiving an electronic mail to and from the operator system 30, the travelling-related company server 40 and other systems.

An image server 35 separately stores and manages image files used in the operator system 30, to thereby enhance a processing speed of the whole system depending upon the processing of the image files.

A registration server 36 manages user information such as membership registration and membership inquiry and registration of billing procedures to pay for a charge for service uses.

A certified network expert (CNX) server 37 prevents a data flow from being concentrated into one place in the operator system 30, to thereby enhancing an operational speed of the system.

A network server 38 monitors a communications state between respective servers and a communications state with respect to external sources. In particular, the network server 38 monitors the operational state of the master server 31 and the slave server 32, to thereby quickly counter-measure when the master server 31 mal-functions.

A database 39 stores various information and registered users information provided for the user clients 20. Here, the registered users information is classified and stored into each item, to thereby enable a registered user to easily search for other users having a desired condition.

The operation of the system shown in FIGs. 1 and 2 having the above configuration will be described below with reference to FIG. 3.

FIG. 3 is a flow-chart view for explaining the travelling mediation method according to the present invention.

An operator of the operator system 30 provides the user clients 20 with travelling information, weather information, traffic information, board-and-lodging information, and school information all over the world, through a web site constructed in the web server 33. The operator receives user information and travelling schedule information for user registration from the user clients 20, via the web site. Here, the web server 33 based on the web has been described, but a wireless Internet-based Internet server can perform the same function as that of the web server 33 in the case that a wireless Internet is used.

In the web site operating in the web server 33, the language used is English and Korean, but Japanese, French or the widely spoken language all over the world can be added. The menu in the web site is divided into each continent or country. If a corresponding menu is clicked, the menu is sub-divided into each country in a corresponding continent or each province in a corresponding country, so that the current page shifts to another web page. The corresponding web page provides travelling information, board-and-lodging information, traffic information, weather information and university information with respect to the corresponding area. Also, the corresponding web page contains menus for reserving traffic facilities such as airlines and railways and board and lodging facilities such as hotels, and a member registration menu for user registration of the user client 20.

The user registration web page displayed when the user registration menu is clicked contains a name, an ID, a password, an age, a travelling routine (primary destination and secondary destination, etc.) an address, hobbies and majors, a school/company, an electronic mail address, and so on, which are to be registered. Also, a residence card number or a social insurance number can be registered so that the user information cannot be registered by false or incorrectly. Here, since the registered items will be used as materials for matching other registered users who fit the best, more detailed and numerous information can be registered in addition to the above items. Also, the web site according to the present invention

requires a massive amount of text files such as files written in htm, html or wml and image files since the present invention makes the target for the travelling-related information and travelling destinations all over the world.

It is a crucial point to quickly display a web page in a web site for a user client 20 on the Internet. The display speed is dependent upon an image file included in the web page.

In the prior art, the web server manages both web document files and image files, but the present invention has constructed an image server 35 for separately managing only image files, to thereby further enhance a display speed of web pages. When the user client 20 is accessed to the web site run in the web server 33, the web server 33 sends an image display command to the image server 35 at the same time of displaying web documents managed by the web server 33.

The image server 35 having received the image display command sends an image necessary for a corresponding web page to the web server 33. Accordingly, a complete web page is displayed on a screen of the user client 20. The image server 35 performs the same function with respect to displaying of all the web pages.

The user client 20 accesses the web site running in the web server 33 of the operator system 30 and finds out his or her desired travelling information to thereby use it. The user who finds out a traveller or travellers who have the closest travelling purposes, hobbies, tastes and majors to his or her own ones among travellers who have the same travelling destination as his or her own travelling destination, should register as a member on the operator system 30.

The travelling information or services can be provided only to each user who can perform a log-in operation with a user ID and password. Otherwise, many and unspecified persons can use the travelling information or services.

The user who wishes to register as a member inputs his or her user information and travelling schedule information and registers as a member using the user client 20 (step 301).

The web server 33 informs the user client 20 that unrecorded items exist if there are the unrecorded items in a user registration web page. If all items in the user registration web page have been completely written and a "registration" icon has been clicked, the web server 33 transmits the user information to the registration server 36 together with a registration signal.

The registration server 36 having received the registration signal stores the information of the registered user in the database 39 by items. Here, the database 39 divides the information of all the users into sexes, ages, hobbies, majors, primary travelling destinations and secondary travelling destinations of each user, and stores the divided information in a corresponding database. The division can be sub-divided and stored. That is, in the case of ages, ages are sub-divided into teen-agers, twenties, thirties and so on, to thereby construct individual databases. In the case of travelling destinations, travelling destinations are sub-divided into the U.S.A., England, Japan and so on by each country or New York, Paris, Jeju Island, and so on by each place, to thereby construct each database.

By doing so, problems with respect to an increase in data amount due to an increase in users or an efficiency in control of users can be solved.

If the user information is stored in the database 39, the master server 31 compares the corresponding user information with previously stored other users' information by items and links the one user with the other user or users (step 302).

For example, the users can be searched in sequence of the same sexes, the same or similar ages, the same hobbies and majors, the same primary and secondary travelling destinations. The searching sequence can be changed and the searching conditions can be also changed. The searching condition can be established at a uni-direction by the operator of the operator system 30. Otherwise, the registered user can establish his or her desired searching condition to perform a searching. In particular, users who have particular tastes or purposes are separately classified among the users, to thereby connect among the particularly classified users. For example, since the number of students who

have opportunities of going abroad to study for overseas language training courses in the case of the students increases. the master server 31 can connect among the students of the universities all over the world.

Further, the users residing in the travelling destination or in the neighbour of the travelling destination are searched together, so that the inhabitant users can provide mediation to the travelling places and the board and lodging matter and solve the safety matter at the travelling places. The users residing at the travelling destination or in the neighbour of the travelling destination can be connected as a mutual conditional relationship such as a give and take condition. That is, users are connected in such a manner that a user "A" gives a board and lodging and other assistances to a member "B" when the member "B" goes to travel in the place where the member "A" resides, under the condition that the member "A" will receive a board and lodging and other assistances from the member "B" residing at his or her travelling destination.

Here, the corresponding users follow a mutual free support principle but can be supported at a minimum cost if desired.

If a comparison result in the result of searching matches a predetermined degree, for example, 85% or more, the master server 31 transmits a mail sending command to the mail server 34.

The mail server 34 having received the mail sending command sends the comparison result to the corresponding users via an e-mail by using the previously stored electronic mail addresses (step 303).

Here, the transmitted e-mail includes travelling service information in addition to the comparison result.

That is, reservation information such as airlines and popular traffics for arrival at the travelling destination, the board and lodging information and product information at the travelling destination, and article information necessary for travelling are provided together. If the provided information is clicked, the user client 20 can be connected directly to the travelling-related company server 40 to

thereby enable reservation and purchase of the travelling-related products and services.

If the corresponding users have received the e-mail and then send back that they have confirmed the comparison result to the operator system 30 using the e-mail. the mail server 34 detects the confirmation and informs the master server 31 of the detected confirmation.

If the confirmation e-mails arrive from the corresponding users. the master server 31 connects the confirmed users with one another by a video communication or a real-time automatic translation chatting (step 304).

For example. the master server 31 notifies the corresponding users of a meeting day and time. Then. if the corresponding users perform a video communication among others at the meeting day and time. or input textual data. an automatic translation chatting is performed while a language is automatically translated into another language. to thereby perform a mutual conversation. which can enable the users to have a more concrete travelling plan.

The slave server 32 operates in the same group as the master server 31. and shares the load of the master server 31.

In the operation of the operator system 30 such as the web site display. the user information comparison and searching. and the mail transmission. a data bottle neck phenomenon can occur where loads are concentrated in a particular server or a particular database. The data bottle neck phenomenon lowers the operational speed of the system and can cause the shutdown of the system in a severe case.

The CNX server 37 monitors data shift in the operator system 30 in order to prevent the data bottle neck phenomenon. and if a load of a predetermined level or more is concentrated in a place. data is distributed to thereby prevent lowering of the processing speed and the system shutdown due to the data bottle neck phenomenon.

For example. if the master server 31 is excessively loaded. the fact is

notified to the master server 31 and the slave server 32, and then the load of the master server 31 is shared by the slave server 32. The access to the database 39 for comparing and searching the user information in the master server 31 is controlled not to be simultaneously concentrated with the access to the database 39 in the other servers.

The network server 38 monitors the connection states between each server in the operator system 30 and the databases and the connection states between the operator system 30 and the external sources such as the user client 20 and the travelling-related company server 40, and monitors the operational states of the master server 31 and the slave server 32.

When the master server 31 operates abnormally, the network server 38 disconnects the network connection of the master server 31, replaces the function of the master server 31 by that of the slave server 32 and lets the master server 31 return to the original function if the master server 31 has been restored.

As a result, even though the master server 31 operates abnormally, the whole operator system 30 is not influenced at all.

The users can access the operator system 30 and the travelling-related company server 40 via each user client 20 enabling a wireless or wired communication any place over the world using their own IDs and passwords, and receive the services from the operator system 30 and the travelling-related company server 40.

That is, the users can access the travelling-related company server 40 via the operator system 30 and directly access the travelling-related company server 40 without passing through the operator system 30.

In the case that the members access the travelling-related company server 40 directly, if the members enter their own IDs and passwords, the travelling-related company server 40 transmits data for user confirmation to the operator system 30.

The registration server 36 in the operator system 30 confirms whether the ID and password of the corresponding user are true, if a confirmation request of the

travelling-related company server 40 has been received. and if the registration has been confirmed. an authentication message is transmitted to the travelling-related company server 40.

The present invention is not limited in the above-described embodiment. It is
5 apparent to a subject skilled in the art that there are many variations and modifications.

Industrial Applicability

10 As described above. the travelling mediation system and method according to the present invention finds out other travellers and friends at a corresponding travelling destination who match well a certain traveller or travellers and connects the one traveller or travellers with the other travellers. to thereby further enhance interests and conveniences of the travelling.

15 In particular. the members can receive mutual mediation to the travelling and board and lodging from the friends residing at or in the vicinity of the corresponding travelling destination. to thereby solve fear of the strange places and safety problem.

CLAIMS

1. A travelling mediation system comprising:
an Internet which enables data communications among a plurality of
5 unspecified people all over the world;
a plurality of user clients which enable data communications by wire or
wireless on the Internet; and
10 an operator system which provides travelling information and travelling-
related services to the user clients. receives user information and travelling
schedule information from the user clients all over the world. compares the user
and travelling schedule information with the other user and travelling schedule
information. and links the one user with the other user or inhabitants who are the
closest user to one another in view of travelling destinations. travelling purposes.
tastes and so on.

15

2. The travelling mediation system of claim 1, further comprising a
travelling-related company server which links with the operator system to provide
traveling-related services to users of the operator system.

20

3. The travelling mediation system of claim 1, wherein said operator
system comprises:

25 a master server which compares user information among registered users
and links the one users with the other users who are the closest users to one
another in view of travelling destinations. travelling purposes. tastes and so on.
and connects among the linked users. and controls the function of the operator
system generally in whole;

a slave server which is constructed as a pair with the master server. and
which shares the load of the master server normally and substitutes the function of
the master server with its own function if the master server is turned down. and if

the master server is restored, the slave server transfers the function to the master server and then shares only the load of the master server mutually:

a web server which is constructed as an Internet web site which provides an interface for the user clients on the Internet;

5 a mail server which performs a function of sending and receiving an electronic mail to and from the user client and the travelling-related company on the Internet;

10 a registration server which manages user information of the members such as membership registration and membership inquiry of the user client and registration of billing procedures to pay for a charge for service uses; and

a database storing data in the operator system.

4. The travelling mediation system of claim 3, further comprising an image server which separately stores and manages image files used in the operator system, to thereby enhance a processing speed of the operator system.

15 5. The travelling mediation system of claim 3, further comprising a certified network expert (CNX) server which prevents a data flow from being concentrated into one place in the operator system.

20

6. The travelling mediation system of claim 3, further comprising a network server which monitors operational states and a communications state between respective servers and a communications state with respect to external sources.

25

7. The travelling mediation system of claim 3, wherein said web server connects universities all over the world on the web site, to thereby mediate students of corresponding universities.

8. A travelling mediation method comprising the steps of:
- (a) receiving user information and travelling schedule information;
 - (b) comparing the received user and travelling schedule information with the previously received other user and travelling schedule information;
 - 5 (c) sending a comparison result to the user included in the comparison result and receiving a confirmation from each user; and
 - (d) connecting among the user having confirmed the comparison result.

9. The travelling mediation method of claim 8, wherein in said step (b) the
10 information of the other users residing at the travelling destination or in the vicinity of the travelling destination is also detected.

10. The travelling mediation method of claim 8, wherein said sending and confirmation of the comparison result in step (c) is performed through an e-mail.

15 11. The travelling mediation method of claim 8, wherein said step (d) determines a meeting day and time and enables a mutual conversation after receiving a return message from each corresponding user having received the comparison result.

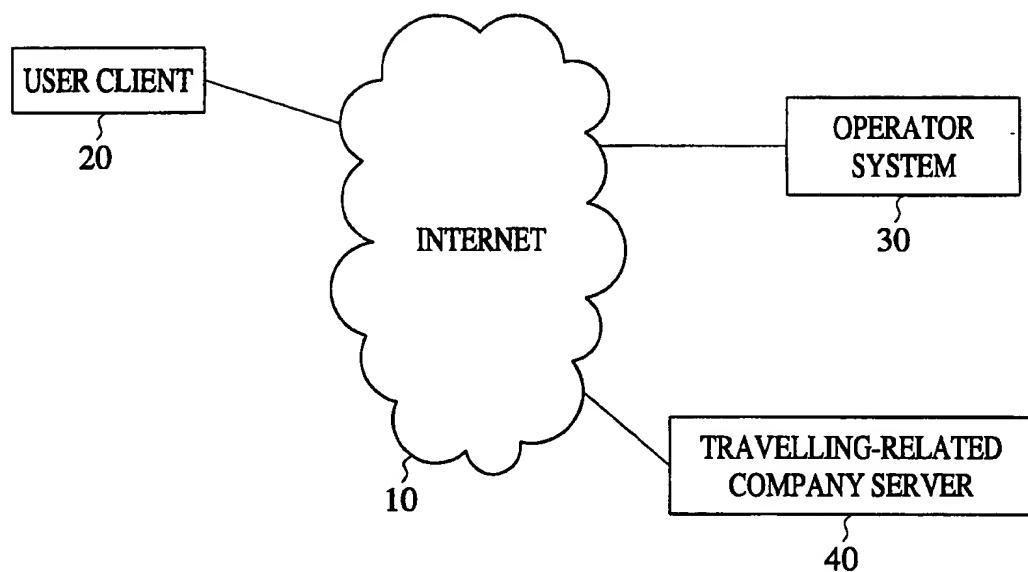
20 12. The travelling mediation method of claim 10, wherein said meeting among the users having received the comparison result is performed via a video communication or a real-time automatic translation chatting.

25 13. The travelling mediation method of claim 9, wherein the one users residing at the travelling destination or in the vicinity of the travelling destination and the other users who intend to travel in the corresponding travelling destination provide assistances to the counterpart users under the condition that the one users should assist the other users during paying a mutual visit.

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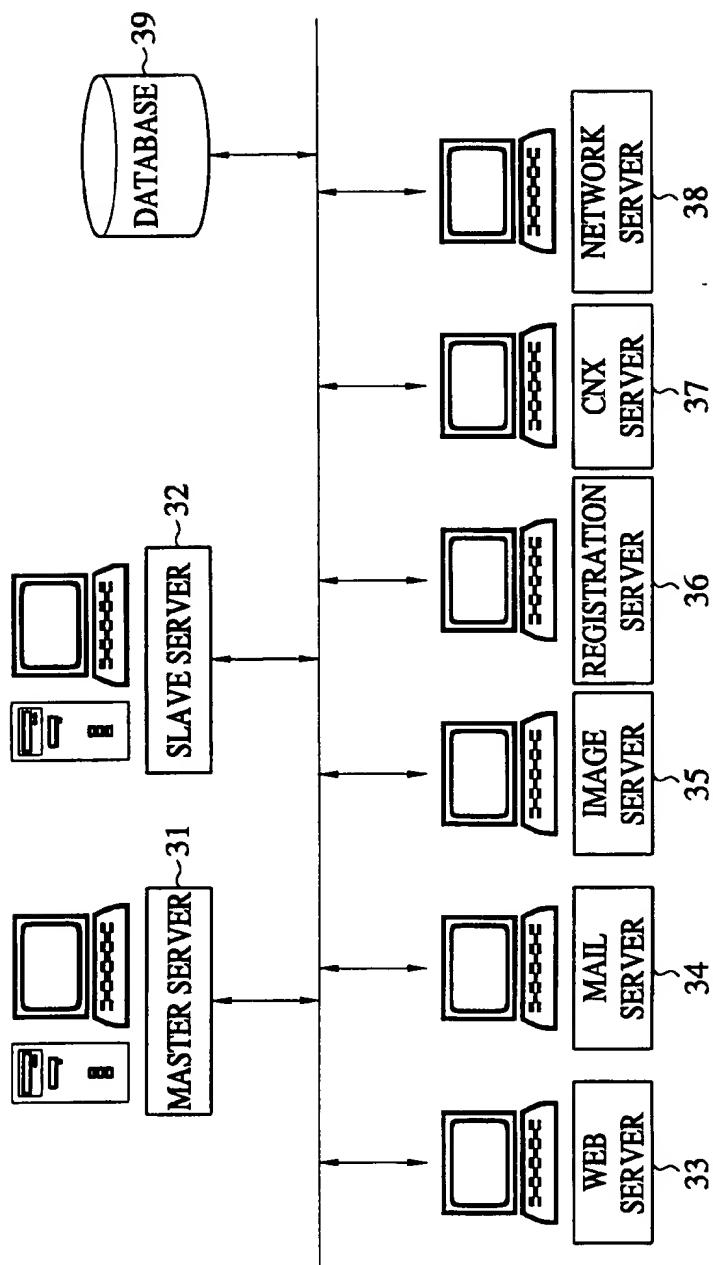
DRAWINGS

FIG. 1



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FIG. 2



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FIG. 3

